

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 ARA-10 ACDA-12 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00

/120 W

-----103270 241815Z /42

P 241620Z MAY 78

FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2421

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 LUBUMBASHI 0558

E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CG

SUBJECT: SHABA II INVASION: DEBRIEFING OF GECAMINES KOLWEZI

REP RENARD

REF: STATE 131406 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: GECAMINES SHIEF OF KOLWEZI OPERATION CLAUDE RENARD WHO HAD EXTENSIVE CONTACT WITH INVADING FORCE AND HAS BEEN QUOTED AS NOTING A CUBAN PRESENCE DURING THE

OCCUPATIOBOF KOLWEZI HAS PROVED THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF HIS EXPERIENCES. THE ONLY PROOF OF CUBAN PRESENCE HE COULD OFFER WAS FROM HIS WIFE, AN ITALIAN NATIVE SPEAKER WHO CLAIMS THAT SHE OVERHEARD BOTH SPANISH AND PORTUGUES BEING SPOKEN BY TWO MEN WHO FREQUENTLY ACCOMPANIED THE POLITICAL COMMISSARS TO THEIR HOUSE BUT NEVER SAID ANYTHING TO THE RENARDS OR SHOWED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH. END SUMMARY.

2. FIGHTING BEGAN JUST BEFORE 0600 ON MAY 13 WITH

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SIMULTANEOUS ATTACKS AT PROBABLY THREE POINTS IN KOLWEZI:

THE AIRPORT, THE QUARTIER GENERAL IN THE OLD CITY NEAR

GCM'S OFFICE AND THE QUARTIER GENERAL ON THE EASTERN

SIDE OF THE NEW CITY. THERE WAS MUCH SHOOTING AT

THE TIME BUT HE HAD NO INDICATION THERE WERE ANY BATTLES.

3. AT 1900 ON MAY 13, TWO EXPATRIATES FRIENDS CALLED TO

SAY THAT THE LOCAL POLITICAL COMMISSAR WANTED TO CALL ON RENARD. THE COMMISSAR INFORMED RENARD THAT KOLWEZI'S OCCUPIERS WERE NOT AGAINST EUROPEANS OR EXPATRIATES AND THEY HOPED THE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THEM IN THE FUTURE. OPPOSITION WAS DIRECTED TOTALLY AGAINST THE MOBUTU REGIME. THE COMMISSAR LAUGHED WHEN IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT HIS TROOPS WERE KATANGAN GENDARMES. HE WAS VERY POLITE BUT GREETED HIS COLLEAGUES WITH SALUTE FROM THE CHEST.

4. THE COMMISSAR ASKED RENARD IF HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET THE COMMANDER OF THE FORCES. RENARD SAID YES. THEY STARTED OFF ON FOOT,, BUT THEN STOPPED A CAR FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE TRIP. DURING THE TRIP RENARD NOTED THAT DESPITE THE PRO-EXPATRIATE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMISSAR, FLNC SOLDIERS SHOWED EVIDENCE OF HOSTILITY, SHOUTING ANTI-WHITE AND ANTI-CAPITALIST COMMENTS AT HIM. HE NOTED SOME PILLAGING BOTH BY SOLDIERS AND LOCAL CIVILIANS. ARRIVING AT THE POST OFFICE, HE LEARNED THE COMMANDER WAS NOT PRESENT.

5. WHILE RETURNING THE POLITICAL COMMISSAR ASKED HIM TO ASSEMBLE ALL EUROPEANS IN ONE PLACE. RENARD SAID THAT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE BECAUSE THERE WERE TOO MANY, ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO MOVE EVERYONE TO ONE SECTION OF TOWN. THE ISSUE WAS NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PURSUED. ALONG THE WAY THE COMMISSAR AND HE INTERVENED TO FREE AN EXPATRIATE COUPLE WHO WERE BEING HARRASSED BY SOLDIERS WHILE TRYING TO GO OUT OF THEIR HOUSE. SATURDAY AFTERNOON WAS QUIET ALTHOUGH A DIFFERENT PERSON CALLING HIMSELF A POLITICAL COMMISSAR VISITED RENARD AND PROVIDED THE SAME ASSURANCES AS THE MORNINGS VISITOR.

6. ON SAUNDAY MAY 14, THE INVADERS BEGAN HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCHES IN CERTAIN SECTIONS OF BOTH THE OLD AND THE NEW CITY. BY THE END OF THE DAY SOME HOUSES HAD BEEN VISITED BY FOUR SEPARATE GROUPS. AS THE DAY PROGRESSED THE ROUTINE SEARCHES INCREASINGLY RESEMBLED LOOTING SESSIONS. PROBABLY THE FIRST EXPATRIATE CASUALTY OCCURRED ON SUNDAY WHEN AN ITALIAN ENGINEER OPENED THE DOOR OF HIS HOUSE AT THE TIME A GROUP OF SOLDIERS WERE FIRING THEIR GUNS INDISCRIMINATELY IN HIS DIRECTION. RANDOM SHOOTING UP OF THE TOWN WAS MUCH MORE THE PATTERN AMONG SOME OF THE LESS-DISCIPLINED SOLDIERS THAN SELECTIVE TARGETING.

7. RENARD BELIEVED THAT LOOTING REACHED A CRESCENDO

ON MONDAY MAY 15. RENARD HAD NO CONTACT WITH THE INVADERS THAT DAY.

8. ON TUESDAY MAY 16 A GROUP OF 15 SOLDIERS CAME TO RENARDS HOME. THEY BEAT HIM UP, BREAKING HIS NOSE, AND LOOTED HIS HOUSE FOR THE FIRST TIME. THEY ACCUSED HIM OF MAINTAINING RADIO CONTACT WITH LUBUMBASHI. ON THE FOLLOWING DAY MAYROQU A THIRD POLITICAL COMMISSAR CAME TO RENARDS HOUSE AND APOLOGIZED FOR THE PREVIOUS DAYS BEATING.

9. LATER THE SAME DAY, RENARD WAS VISITED BY ONE OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSARS AND TOLD TO PASS A MESSAGE TO LUBUMBASHI THAT THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES EXPECTED FOREIGN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MILITARY INTERVENTION WHICH THEY WOULD REGARD AS AN ACT OF WAR. THE MESSAGE ADDED THAT THE SITUATION WAS VERY DELICATE. THIS WAS THE LAST TELEPHONE CONTACT OUT OF KOLWEZI.

10. RENARD NOTED THAT MOST OF THE KILLING OF EXPATRIATES OCCURRED ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY. VICTIMS WERE OFTEN PEOPLE WHO FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER WERE FOUND IN LARGE GROUPS OR VENTURED TO WALK AROUND TOWN. ONE GROUP OF MORE THAN TWENTY WHO WERE KILLED HAD BEEN FORCED TO MOVE BY FAZ ON MAY 13 FROM THEIR HOUSES NEAR THE FAZ HQS TO THE NEW CITY TO A SINGLE LOCATION. WHEN THE FAZ RETREATED THE PEOPLE REMAINED TOGETHER AND WERE MACHINE GUNNED TO DEATH WHEN REBEL FORCE FOUND THEM.

11. ON THURSDAY MAY 18 RENARD WAS GIVEN A LETTER

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SIGNED BY GENERAL MBUMBA ADDRESSED TO THE HEADS OF GCM, ZNCZ, AND OTHER LARGE SHABAN COMPANIES. THE LETTER REPEATED THAT THE FLNC WAS NOT ANTI-WHITE OR ANTI FOREIGN, AND AIMED ONLY TO OVERTHROW THE MOBUTU REGIME. THE LETTER REQUESTED THAT HE WRITE TO THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT ASKING THAT THEY NOT INTERVENE. RENARD SAID

HE WAS FORCED TO PREPARE THE RESPONSE TO HIS GOVERNMENT. TRYING TO REMAIN UNINVOLVED POLITICALLY, RENARD SAID THAT HE DRAFTED A LETTER WHICH SAID THAT THE POPULATION OF KOLWEZI DID NOT WANT TO INTERVENE IN POLITICAL QUESTIONS, BUT ONLY WANTED TO RETURN TO THEIR WORK. THE LETTER ASKED THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE FOOD AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES AT THE FIRST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY. THE COMMISSAR SAID THE LETTER WOULD BE GIVEN TO GENERAL MBUMBA FOR TRANSMISSION VIA ANGOLA TO THE FLNC REPRESENTATIVE IN BRUSSELS.

12. IT WAS PROBABLY THURSDAY, ALTHOUGH WAS NOT CERTAIN OF THE DAY, THAT THE FLNC THREATENED TO PUT RENARD ON TRIAL. RENARD ARGUED HIS WAY OF THE TRIAL  
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BY SAYING IT WOULD BE MOST ADVISABLE THAT GCM'S SENIOR EMPLOYEE IN KOLWEZI BE AVAILABLE TO MEET WITH GENERAL MBUMBA AND OTHER FLNC LEADERS WHEN THEY ARRIVED IN KOLWEZI IF THEY EXPECTED FUTURE WESTERN ASSISTANCE.

13. EVERYONE IN KOLWEZI EXPECTED AN IMMEDIATE PARACHUTE DROP AFTER THE RADIO ANNOUNCEMENTS BEGAN ON MAY 18. AT 1900 HOURS RENARD AND HIS FAMILY TOOK BLANKETS TO SLEEP OUT IN THE FIELD IN BACK OF THEIR HOUSE BECAUSE THEY THOUGHT THERE WOULD BE FIGHTING THAT NIGHT. AT 0540 ON MAY 19, HE RETURNED HOME AND FOUND THAT A GROUP OF REBELS HAD LOOTED HIS HOUSE OF ALMOST EVERYTHING OF VALUE DURING THE NIGHT.

14. ON FRIDAY MAY 19, RENARD AND HIS FAMILY WENT TO THE CONVENT OF THE SISTERS WHO RAN THE GCM HOSPITAL. HE

REPORTED THERE WERE 72 OTHER EXPATRIATES WHO SPENT THE EVENING OF THE FRENCH PARATROOPERS ATTACK AT THE CONVENT. ONE OF THE ZAIRIANS WHO WORKED AT THE CONVENT SUBSEQUENTLY SAID THAT MANY OF THE REBELS HAD RETREATED TO ZONE KOLWEZI, SOUTH OF THE TOWN WHERE HE LIVED, FRIDAY NIGHT AND SATURDAY MORNING. THE REBELS HAD CHANGED THEIR CLOTHES, HIDDEN THEIR WEAPONS, AND SUBMERGED THEMSELVES AMONG THE LOCAL POPULATION.

15. AS OF SATURDAY AFTERNOON MAY 20, RENARD DID NOT BELIEVE THERE HAD BEEN MUCH DAMAGE TO GECAMINES FACILITIES HE NOTED THAT MANY TELEPHONE POLES HAD FALLEN OVER WHICH WOULD MAKE RESTORATION OF ELECTRICITY DIFFICULT. AS SOON AS THE FRENCH HAD OCCUPIED A SECTION OF THE TOWN RENARD NOTED THAT FAZ SOLDIERS BEGAN LOOTING HOUSES.

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16. RENARDS GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

(A) PRESENCE OF ANGOLANS; CUBANS; ALL RENARDS CONVERSATIONS WITH POLITICAL COMMISSARS AND OTHERS WERE IN ZAIRIAN FRENCH. THE FIRST VISITORS TO HIS HOUSE ARRIVED ON FOOT AND ALONE. AFTER CARDS WERE EXPROPRIATED THEY CAME BY VEHICLE, ONE MILITARY AND ONE CIVILIAN ALWAYS SITTING IN THE CAR WHILE MESSAGES WERE BEING DELIVERED. HIS WIFE, AN ITALIAN CITIZEN WHO UNDERSTANDS PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH, OVERHEARD CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THESE INDIVIDUALS IN BOTH THESE LANGUAGES. THESE INDIVIDUALS RENARD MAINTAINED NEVER SPOKE FRENCH AND DID NOT LOOK ZAIRIAN, BUT HE COULD OFFER NO FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THEY WERE CUBANS.

(B) LARGE NUMBERS OF THE ZAIRIAN POPULATION OF THE CITES THE POORER SECTION OF TOWN, SHOWED SUPPORT FOR THE INVADERS AND PARTICIPATED IN BOTH THE OCCUPATION AND THE LOOTING.

(C) MANY OF THE FLNC INCLUDING SOME OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSARS HAD LIVED PREVIOUSLY IN KOLWEZI OR WERE RESIDING THERE JUST PRIOR TO THE ATTACK. HE NOTED MANY HAD EMERGED FROM THE CITES. THEY KNEW THEIR WAY AROUND TOWN. ONE OF THE POLITICAL COMMISSARS TOLD HIM HE HAD PASSED THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS IN A HOUSE NEAR RENARDS.

(D) WHILE THE LEADERSHIP MAINTAINED IT WANTED FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY, MANY OF THE LOWER LEVEL SOLDIERS AND THE KOLWEZI RESIDENTS WHO JOINED THEM SHOWED INTENSE ANTI-WHITE AND ANTI-CAPITALISTS

FEELINGS.

(E) LOOTING WAS WIDESPREAD. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT LOCAL CITIZENS AND FAZ SOLDIERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR GREATER AMOUNTS OF LOTTING THAN WERE THE INVADERS.AS PROOF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HE NOTED THATTHERE HAD BEEN EXTENSIVE LOOTING OF ALL THE EXPATRIATES HOMES AT WASSALE, A LAKE RESORT NEAR KOLWEZI WHICH THE INVADERS NEVER OCCUPIED OR ENTERED.

17. RENARDS GENERAL VIEW ON THE INVATIONS. RENARD IS STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST . HE STATED HIS CONVICTION THE INVASTION WAS A PART OF A GRAND RUSSIAN/CUBAN STRATEGY TO OVERTHROWZAIRE BUILD A BAND OF COMMUNIST STATES ACROSS CENTRAL AFRICA AND DEPRIVE THE WEST OF ITS SOURCE OF COBALT. HE NOTED THAT FAZ HAD A FEW ABLE SENIOR OFFICERS NOTABLY GENERAL SINGA AND COLONEL SASSA BUT THAT THE AVERAGE SOLDIERS WERE NO GOOD.FAZ COULD NO LONGER PROVIDE SECURITY IN SHABA. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY OF THE KOLWEZI EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY WOULD RETURN UNLESS THERE WERE A FOREIGN TROOP PRESENCE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** INVASIONS, DEBRIEFINGS  
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**Draft Date:** 24 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** MOPS, PINS, CG  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014